

ESG Request

Project Site Location:

250 S. 7th Street
Lebanon, PA 17042
Lebanon County, Lebanon City

What do you plan to accomplish with this project?

Lebanon County Christian Ministries (LCCM) is a local non-profit 501c3 organization providing a family-based emergency shelter for families. The program is FRESH Start Emergency Resource Center and Shelter. FRESH Start as a program provides a congregate overnight shelter site at a different church in the community, rotating every two weeks. During the day, guests congregate at the Emergency Resource Center for laundry, showers, kitchen facilities, and computers for job searches/housing searches.

On March 13, 2020, the program was moved to a non-congregate setting at a hotel for the purpose of mitigating the COVID-19 pandemic and reducing the opportunity for spread of the virus in a congregate setting. By March 13, 2020 guidance was available from HUD to support this move and case scenarios from the western areas of the country noted success in the mitigation of COVID-19 by utilizing the hotel setting. As a non-profit organization with restricted revenue sources, LCCM/Fresh Start began to immediately apply for local and state grant opportunities from both private and public resources. To date, grant funding has been able to cover the expenses of the hotel stay. This funding will be exhausted by December 31, 2020.

An initial plan to move guests in the shelter into a semi-congregate, single location site after the new year has been in draft. However, recent increase in COVID-19 positive cases across the county of Lebanon, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the nation has caused concern and a delay in forward progress. Additionally, initial volunteer surveys are proving to be inundated with concern and lack of sustainable numbers to provide the needed volunteer support to staff the overnights of the semi-congregate setting.

With ESG Funding we would expect to address the problems of lack of volunteers, potential spread of COVID-19 in a semi-congregate setting and support the financial need to operate the Emergency Shelter.

How do you plan to accomplish it?

LCCM/Fresh Start have a strong relationship with a local hotel. We would intend to enhance the relationship with a plan of action to provide a long-term sustainability plan for housing. During this time, we would continue with case management from our team and use of our resource center. During this year of hotel stay and continued case management, we will work collaboratively with other community partners to establish a physical non-congregate shelter.

A group of committed and vested community partners, including our local United Way, Wellspan Health, Community Health Council, and Coalition to End Homelessness, have been meeting to establish need for a low barrier shelter and the need for a physical family based shelter. As of the writing of the grant request, we have secured seed funding to purchase a physical building.

At admission to our homeless shelter, a plan of action is developed for each guest. This includes benchmarked goals. The goals are established with the guest and include items such as but not limited to; securing employment, securing childcare, establishing checking accounts, saving for a home, and attending programs for parenting, financial empowerment, and ensuring children are attending school. Check-ins with the staff are mandated daily. This also includes COVID-19 screenings.

How do you plan to use the funds?

Funding will be prioritized to fund hotel expenses at \$15,000 monthly for a total of \$180,000 for the year. This will secure a non-congregate setting and consistency for our staff and guests. This is based on the average monthly expense since the March 13, 2020 move to the hotel. The request also asks for complete funding of the shelter operations to include staff wages and benefits. LCCM/Fresh Start will reallocate fund raising efforts and funding to support the future physical shelter. This will establish a scenario where the guests will have a destination for post hotel stay.

Staff wages only include staff who are handling case management and does not include administrative overhead and supervision. All funds received from the grant would be to provide housing and case management to our guests.

Projected Schedule and Key Milestones and Dates

The schedule will be providing funding of the shelter and hotel from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021. Key milestones will include the monitoring of COVID-19 cases, vaccination availability, community spread, and establishing additional funding to support a physical shelter location.

The intent would be to have secured a physical non-congregate setting for a shelter by December 31, 2021. By funding the shelter operations, LCCM/Fresh Start will re-allocated private donor dollars to the establishment of the physical shelter.

Budget Spreadsheet attached

Basis of cost

Staff/Benefits – Estimate based on past expenditures

Hotel – Estimate based on prior average monthly usage

Supplies, postage, and printing – Estimate based on past expenditures

Equipment purchase/rental - Estimate based on past expenditures

Client Transportation Services - Estimate based on past expenditures

Budget Narrative

The FRESH Start staffing model prior to COVID-19 was staff on site seven day per week from 7:15 AM until 10:00 PM. During COVID-19 adjustments were made to staffing. With the guests staying in the hotel, we relied on daily contacts for accountability and COVID-19 screening. Two staff members were assigned to 08:00 AM until 04:00 PM Monday through Friday. Saturday and Sunday, other team members perform double task of shelter monitoring and the Free Noon Meal monitoring. The staffing funding request will cover payroll and benefits for the current staff for one year.

The hotel provides a contracted rate of \$59.99 per night, tax exempt for LCCM. We have averaged 8 rooms per night for a projected cost of \$175,170. Funding is being requested for one year at a total expense of \$180,000. Currently we have fifteen rooms occupied by our guests. The additional \$5,000 requested will provide funding for surge capacity, specifically during winter months.

Supplies, postage, and printing will cover the costs associated with the operations. This includes drug tests, printer paper, laundry supplies, cleaning supplies, and other supplies to provide support to our guests.

Equipment purchase and rental supports the technology in the resource center for printing, computers, and other equipment to support the goals of our guests.

Client transportation services funds transportation for our guests. We utilize a taxicab when needed to ensure our guests are able to get to medical appointments, work, and other appointments that will assist them with acquiring stable housing.

Type of Assistance Being Requested

This ESG request is for Emergency Shelter/Temporary Emergency Shelter specific to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Detailed Program Narrative and Statement of Need

Today, 35 guests are relying on LCCM/Fresh Start for meeting the basic need of housing. Four single males, one single female, and multiple families are housed in a hotel as part of the mitigation efforts of LCCM/Fresh Start from COVID-19. Eighteen of the total 35 guests are children. These children rely on our team of case managers to work with their parents to ensure continuity of their education. Additionally, our team works with each family unit to establish their own set of achievable goals. The main goal of each guest is to establish long term sustainable and affordable housing.

To achieve this bold goal, we establish many other smaller goals such as employment, better employment, skill development, financial empowerment, and saving money for housing. In Lebanon County affordable housing is difficult to find. Based on the United Way's ALICE report, nearly 30 percent of residents live in unaffordable housing situations. Roughly 39 percent of the Lebanon City residents are living in unaffordable housing situations and nearly one-fifth of survey respondents reported that affordable housing was an unmet need.

COVID-19 has changed the way the FRESH Start program works. Pre-COVID the shelter was a congregate setting, rotating from church to church every two weeks. Based on guidance from HUD, FRESH Start was quickly moved to a hotel environment to help contain or eliminate the spread of COVID. As of today, zero cases have been identified in our shelter. COVID screenings occur daily and guests continue to be made aware of the importance of social distancing, mask wearing, and hand washing.

The LCCM/FRESH Start team have continued to work tirelessly to still move guests into housing. Some of these guests have been moved into alternative environments with the assistance and partnership of the local hospital, Wellspan Good Samaritan Hospital. Additionally, guests are quarantined upon arrival and then moved into shared rooms. This is completed to ensure fiscal responsibility and manage our

guests as small pods. This includes the use of our resource center. The resource center provides a location for laundering, showering, and preparing food. Additionally, it provides a location for our younger guests to complete their schoolwork. In fact, LCCM staff children have come into the shelter to provide one on one tutoring.

Through our mission to provide the basic needs to our guests, LCCM also provides food and clothing through our food pantry and clothing bank as needed.

This grant opportunity would provide funding for one year in the hotel environment. LCCM is committed to leverage this opportunity to then use private contributions to support a project to establish a physical shelter location with a non-congregate environment.

Shelter Expense	Expense
Staff Wages	\$ 98,500.00
Staff benefits	\$ 3,000.00
Hotel Expense	\$ 180,000.00
Supplies, Postage, and Printing	\$ 5,943.00
Equipment purchase/rental	\$ 5,520.00
Client Transportation Services	\$ 5,789.35
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